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Finance, Wage, & Personnel Standing Committee of the RTM

Special Meeting Agenda

October 26, 2026 6:00PM

BoE Conference Room, Town Hall

1. Confirmation of Quorum and Call to Order
2. Public Comment
3. Consideration and Action on Minutes of the September 22, 2026, Committee Meeting
4. Consideration of and possible action on items referred to committee:
 - a. Salaries of Elected Officials (RTC 12/2/24)
 - b. Review of Ordinance 3.17 Fleet Management (RTC 8/4/25)
 - c. CIP Approval Process Pilot Program (RTC 6/2/25)
 - d. Budget Transfers Ordinance (10/5/26)
5. Adjournment

encl: FWP 9/22/26 Minutes
Draft Recommendation

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**Finance, Wage, & Personnel Committee
Meeting Minutes from September 22, 2026**

Members Present: JoAnna Bennett, Steve Besade, Kate MacKenzie

Also Present: Town Attorney Kristi Kelly, RTM Moderator Sue Driscoll

1. Confirmation of Quorum and Call to Order

Chair JoAnna Bennett called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

2. Public Comment

Helen Kwasniewski, Waterford citizen, expressed her opinion on the salaries of elected officials, while stressing the importance of fair tax rates for seniors.

3. Consideration and Action on Minutes of the August 12, 2026, Committee Meeting

Motion by MacKenzie, second by Besade to approve minutes as presented.

Voice vote: Unanimous. Motion passed.

4. Consideration of and possible action on items referred to the committee:

- Salaries of Elected Officials (RTC 12/2/24)
- Review of Ordinance 3.17 Fleet Management (RTC 8/4/25) No discussion.
- CIP Approval Process Pilot Program (RTC 6/2/25) No discussion.

The committee reviewed the financial numbers the Chair pulled together for the two final options from August - both of which include a general wage increase as well as a base increase before election dates. Attorney Kelly has confirmed that this approach is in line with the Constitution and the approach that West Hartford takes. After a brief chat about health insurance and pension benefits for full-time officials, Attorney Kelly noted that we can't add an extra increase for 2026 since the deadline has passed. Each present member voted, and with a 2-out-of-3 majority, Option B was chosen. The Chair will weave Option B into the draft final recommendation for us to review at our next meeting.

5. Adjournment

Consensus to tentatively schedule the next meeting for October 26th.

Motion by Besade, second by MacKenzie to adjourn the meeting at 6:43 p.m. Voice Vote: Unanimous.

Submitted by:

JoAnna Bennett

Chair, Finance, Wage and Personnel Committee

Recommendation: Wage Increases for Elected Officials Serving Four-Year Terms

I. Purpose and Statutory Authority

Pursuant to the Connecticut State Constitution and legal guidance provided by Town Attorney Kelly, this proposal seeks to establish a predictable, fair, and legally compliant schedule for the compensation of paid elected officials serving four-year terms.

Under state law, the Representative Town Meeting (RTM) may only increase compensation for paid elected officials serving four-year terms once, after the official has completed two years of their current term. Attorney Kelly shared the model that West Hartford uses, which includes the establishment of the salary for the elected position as of the commencement of the term, and provides for a general wage increase midterm as well as a base increase—both of which are established by the Town Council before the start of the upcoming term. Attorney Kelly has confirmed that this approach is in line with the State Constitution.

II. Proposed Wage Adjustment Structure

To balance the necessity of maintaining compensation comparable to that of paid elected officials in other towns with the need for fiscal responsibility to the taxpayers, the following adjustment schedule is proposed:

- **Base Increase:** A fixed 1.5% base increase shall be implemented on the first day of the upcoming term.
- **General Wage Increase:** A fixed 1.5% general wage increase shall be applied after the elected officials have completed two years of their term.
- **Effective Dates:** To ensure clarity and administrative consistency, raises will be triggered as follows:
 - **Board of Selectmen and Tax Collector (Terms begin in November):**
 - **Base Increase (1.5%):** Takes effect on the date when the term starts.
 - **General Wage Increase (1.5%):** Takes effect on December 1st immediately following completion of two years of service.
 - **Town Clerk and Treasurer (Terms begin in January):**
 - **Base Increase (1.5%):** Takes effect on the date when the term starts.
 - **General Wage Increase (1.5%):** Takes effect on February 1st immediately following completion of two years of service.

III. Health Benefits and Cost-Sharing

To align salaried elected officials' benefits with town labor standards and ensure equitable contribution, the following policy continues to apply:

- **Opt-in Requirement:** Salaried elected officials who choose to participate in the Town's health insurance plan shall be required to pay the same ~~same~~ ~~share~~ ~~premium~~ cost-share at the same rate approved for the NUMPS (Non-Union Management Personnel) ~~or equivalent~~ bargaining unit.

IV. Administrative Oversight

- **Tracking:** The Department of Human Resources shall be responsible for maintaining a master roster of term start dates and ensuring that both the Base Increase (1.5%) and the General Wage Increase (1.5%) are implemented at the appropriate date for each official.
- **Future Review:** This policy is intended to provide a long-term framework; however, the RTM retains the authority to revisit, adjust, or sunset this structure through future legislative action as economic conditions dictate. It should be noted that state law requires that elected officials' wages for a four-year term be established before that term begins and no adjustments, whether increases or decreases, may be implemented no wage increase for an elected official may be applied retroactively.

V. Proposed Wage Adjustment Schedule

Official	Election Date	Implement 1.5% Base Increase / Term Starts	Implement 1.5% General Wage Increase
First Selectman and Selectmen	Nov 2, 2027	Nov 16, 2027	Dec 1, 2029
Tax Collector	Nov 2, 2027	Nov 16, 2027	Dec 1, 2029
Town Clerk	Nov 2, 2027	Jan 3, 2028	Feb 1, 2030
Treasurer	Nov 2, 2027	Jan 3, 2028	Feb 1, 2030
First Selectman and Selectmen	Nov 4, 2031	Nov 18, 2031	Dec 1, 2033
Tax Collector	Nov 4, 2031	Nov 18, 2031	Dec 1, 2033
Town Clerk	Nov 4, 2031	Jan 5, 2032	Feb 1, 2034
Treasurer	Nov 4, 2031	Jan 5, 2032	Feb 1, 2034
First Selectman and Selectmen	Nov 6, 2035	Nov 20, 2035	Dec 1, 2037
Tax Collector	Nov 6, 2035	Nov 20, 2035	Dec 1, 2037
Town Clerk	Nov 6, 2035	Jan 7, 2036	Feb 1, 2038
Treasurer	Nov 6, 2035	Jan 7, 2036	Feb 1, 2038

Statutory References:

CT General Statutes Chapter 146 Sec. 9-189 https://www.cga.ct.gov/2025/pub/chap_146.htm#sec_9-187a

- * BoS/Tax Collector: term starts by 2nd Tuesday following election
- * Town Clerk/Treasurer: term starts on first Monday of Jan following election

Amendment to the CT Constitution

Article XIX

Adopted Nov 24, 1982

Except as provided in this section, neither the state nor any political subdivision of the state shall pay or grant to any elected official of the state or any political subdivision of the state, any compensation greater than the amount of compensation set at the beginning of such official's term of office for the office which such official holds or increase the pay or compensation of any public contractor above the amount specified in the contract. The provisions of this section shall not apply to elected officials in towns in which the legislative body is the town meeting. The compensation of an elected official of a political subdivision of the state whose term of office is four years or more may be increased once after such official has completed two years of his term by the legislative body of such political subdivision. The term "compensation" means, with respect to an elected official, such official's salary, exclusive of reimbursement for necessary expenses or any other benefit to which his office would entitle him.

https://www.cga.ct.gov/asp/Content/constitutions/Constitution_State_CT.pdf